

My name is Ruth Cook and I'm 100 years old. At this stage of my life I require 24 hour assistance to be able to carry out activities of daily living. I've become more and more aware that these women will all work extra shifts at every opportunity. Without them my life would be not only diminished but likely it's impossible that I can continue to live. In my own apartment. And comfortably.

For the last 80 years I have been actively involved in voting rights advocacy. Even as recently as this past year I have done a lot of work with postcarding to voters to enable them to get out and vote. I've supported voting rights efforts financially and through the labeling and stamping through postcards.

It's been very important to me that I am able to spend my time getting voting information to voters who may not have accurate information and/or may not have the time off to be able to get to vote. So imagine my surprise when I learned that here in Connecticut these women who devote themselves to patient care full-time often do not have election day off. They're required to work on that day in order to make ends meet. They don't qualify for absentee ballots in our state which I think is unconscionable.

These are all women of a socioeconomic class who are not able to take off time in order to go vote. I had no idea that Connecticut was so restrictive in the rules as to who is eligible for an absentee ballot or to vote by mail. I moved here from Florida where of course vote by mail was universally accessible. For the many things that Connecticut has that makes it a wonderful place for me to live, one disappointment for me has been that hourly frontline workers often don't vote because they can't take the time off.

I encourage you to expand ballot access through early voting as many early voting days as possible, voting locations should be on public transportation routes and absolutely these hard-working people should be able to qualify for an absentee ballot without any questions asked. Thank you